The Orthodox Herald

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Volume 54, No. 1 ISSUE 636 MAY 2005 www.orthodoxherald.homestead.com

THE EASTER BASKET

The contents of the Easter basket brought to the church for the blessing of food varies. It depends on the region of Europe from which the elders of the family migrated. Those for whom this is an adopted custom probably follow that prevalent in the parish they are attending. The Easter basket is the pride and joy of the family. People judged the mistress of the house on how her basket looked, what it contained, and how it was decorated.

The basket is lined with a newly-laundered white cloth or with an embroidered one, if someone is fortunate enough to have two. An embroidered one is used to cover the basket. These covers become heirlooms in families, are passed down, are given as coveted gifts and are treasured to be used only on the Easter basket. Some are so beautiful that they are framed and hung on the wall in the dining area.

A candle is placed in the basket to be lighted at the time of the blessing. Some people decorate their baskets with fragrant herbs, flowers, or periwinkle.

A must for blessing is a round, rich bread called a paska bread or a kulich. Sometimes this is not placed in the basket but wrapped in a large cloth and carried to be blessed in a sling fashion.

Other items placed in the basket are samples of the food to be eaten. These can be eggs, cheese, butter, ham, sausage/kolbasi, horseradish, salt, salo/salt pork, wine, seeds, etc. None of this blessed food, including the eggshells, should be discarded with the garbage. What is not eaten must be buried or burned.

With a greeting of "Christ is Risen" and the response "Indeed, He is Risen," everyone breaks their fast with the blessed food.

This is the Day of Resurrection!
Let us shine with the light of the Feast !
And let us embrace one another!
O Brethren !
Let us say unto them that hate us:
Forgive all because of the Resurrection !
And so let us all cry out aloud:

Christ is Risen!
Indeed He is Risen!

CHRIST IS RISEN!

The Resurrection of Christ is the whole key to our faith as Christians. Pascha is known as the "Feast of Feasts." It is the biggest celebration in the entire church year. Christ's Resurrection from the dead changed the world forever because it gave us the hope of the world to come. It gives us hope of a better world that is not only free from sin but an eternally perfect world with God.

Pascha, the day on which we celebrate the Resurrection, is more than the day on which our fasting ends. It is more than just a celebration of the church to meet with family and friends. It is what defines us as Christians. We must keep the Resurrection at the forefront of our minds, so that whatever we do, wherever we go our faith as Christians will guide us to make the right decisions.

The cross that most of us wear around our necks is a reminder of what Christ did for us. If you take notice, you will see that the cross which most Orthodox Christians wear does not have the crucified Christ on it. Instead, it is the cross of the Resurrected Christ. In other words, the Cross is empty because Christ is

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

MY MOTHER'S PRAYER BOOK

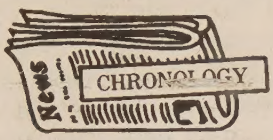
I inherited my mother's prayer book. It was falling apart and seemed to automatically open to pages of her most used prayers. It makes tears come to my eyes to find that she especially prayed for us, her five children. Parts of the prayer reads: "I humbly pray for the children You have graciously given me. ... Preserve them in Your grace to the end of their life ... Aid me also by Your grace that I may bring them up for the glory of Your holy Name and for the benefit of all mankind. Grant me the necessary means to this end together with patience and fortitude ... Instill in their hearts a fear of evil ... Protect them from misfortune, anger, privitation, and the snares of the devil all the days of their life ... Enable me to appear with them at Thy awesome judgment, and there, without fear, to say: 'Here I am, Lord, with the children Thou has given me.' That together with them, ...I may glorify Your most holy Name."

Another part of her prayer book, which was darkened from use and stained with her tears, was the Paraklis to the Mother of God. How she must have prayed this when one of us was sick, troubled or near death.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, also experienced these times of joy and sorrow. What joy when the Christ-child was born! What excitement when the shepherd and later the wise men came to worship Him! What uneasiness when Simeon prophesied that a sword would pierce her soul. And what heart-wrenching grief as she watched her Son dying on the cross! But her seasons of motherhood didn't end with that terrible scene. She rejoiced that He arose from the grave. "That He trampled down death by death". And

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THE ORTHODOX HERALD
(USPS 600-140)
(ISSN 0744-1495)
Published monthly by
The Orthodox Herald, Inc.
Transjurisdictional Publication
Special non-profit rate
Entered as Periodical-Class Mail at
Hunlock Creek, PA 18621 and Scranton, PA 18505
an additional mailing office.
Founders and Editors: V. Rev. W. Basil
Stroyen, M.A., Ph.D., D.D. and Nina Bohush
Stroyen, R.N., D.D., D. Litt
Computerist Betty Kovach
Web Master - Michael Wesdell
Annual Subscription $8.00 a year.
$12.00 for two years.
Packet Plan Rate on Request
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
P.O. Box 9
Hunlock Creek, PA 18621-0009
Phone 570-256-7232
Web www.orthodoxherald.homestead.com
Contributions are tax-deductible
Published since 1952



MAY 2005

DIED: Fr. Basil Buchovecky, retired, in Cranberry Township, PA
Fri. Ioann Sviridov, retired, in Detroit, MI

STILL NOT TOO LATE to apply for a Mission Team for 2005. There are openings all over the world to serve from 1-4 weeks. All ages can apply. What a life experience! For info on dates, places, costs, applications, etc. visit www.ocmc.org or contact Mission Center at teams@ocmc.org or call 1-877-463-6784.

SUMMER INSTITUTE OF ICONOGRAPHY is holding classes, many varied classes from pysanky to gesso techniques from May through August. There are classes for adults as well as children. Contact Nadine Thola of the Iconography Guild of Washington, DC at inkspots@cox.net or visit www.picturetrail.com/ntink.spots. or call 703/660-6782.

A STATUE OF ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS will stand on the grounds of the Greek Orthodox Church recently consecrated in Havana, Cuba.

A CLERGY WIVES RETREAT is scheduled for September 22-25 at SS Mary and Martha Women's Monastery in Wagner, SC. For info contact Kyra Moore at 803-926-7591.

PSALM, a Pan-Orthodox Society for the Advancement of Liturgical Music, will hold a weekend conference at SS Peter and Paul Church in Jersey City, NJ from May 13-15. The topic is Vespers and Matins in the Eucharistic Cycle. Cost: $95 for materials and meals. For info contact: Carol Wetmore 973/786-5149, wetmorel @aol.com or Doreen Bartholomew 516/437-5760, johndoreen@worldnet.att.net

THE SILOAM POOL AT BETHESDA (John 5:2) has been found by archaeologists working with the Israel Government's Antiquities Authority, which is negotiating with the Greek Orthodox Church, which owns the land, to continue the dig. The pool's stone steps were uncovered in the 1960's.

HUNDREDS OF CASSETTES are available to borrow, rent or buy covering many topics by many presenters. Contact: Orthodox Christian Cassettes, 2919 N. 56th St., Springdale, AR 72762. Telephone 479/750-3808 or ocassette2aol.com. Catalogue available.

TWO COLOSSAL BELLS, named Perevenets (Firstborn) and Blagovestnik (Evangelist), weighing 27 tons and 35.5 tons, costing over a million dollars, have been installed in the belfry at Holy Trinity St. Sergius Monastery in Sergiev Posad in Russia. The bells have been paid for by a state-run nuclear power company. It is hoped that a third bell, to be named Tsar, weighing 64 tons and costing 2.9 million dollars, will be added. This would then replace a set of three bells torn down and smashed in 1930 as part of an anti-religious campaign.

THE ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO ALASKA this year will mark the 35th year since the glorification of St. Herman. The festivities will take place from August 7-9.

SEVERAL PARISHES NOW HAVE parish nursing ministries. The programs are varied but may include general good health promotion, referral and advocacy, visitation and holistic care. Resources may be found at www.oca.org.

FOCA (the former FROC) will hold its convention from September 1-5 at the Hilton Mark Center Hotel in Alexandria, VA.

THE 100TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY of St. Tikhon's Monastery, So Canaan, PA will be observed from May 27-30. The Hierarchal Divine Liturgy will be held at 9:14 on Monday May 30.

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A PARTICULAR ICON, contact Icons Plus, 27 West Judson Ave., Youngstown, OH 44507, phone 330/782-1310 or email tedkho@cisnet.com. Also available is a book of 50 different icons of the Mother of God with a story of each. Send $15 plus shipping.

IN GREAT BRITAIN about 40% of the Orthodox clergy are converts while about 3% of the faithful are converts.

THE DIALOG BETWEEN THE Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church outside of Russia began in 1993. It was interrupted by the seizure of the Hebron Monastery in the summer of 1997 and the seizure of the monastery in Jericho in January 2000. Talks had then been resumed but the status of these monasteries is creating problems.

MANY ADULT-SIZE baptismal fonts are being installed in the Orthodox Churches in Russia because of the number of adult baptisms.

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL HERALD, the Greek-American daily, Patriarch Bartholomew criticized Archbishop Demetrios for allowing Metropolitan Philip of the Antiochian Archdiocese to "spread his propaganda in favor of establishing an autocephalous," or independent, "Orthodox Church in America." Bartholomew was not molified when Demetrios explained that Philip spoke in his capacity as vice-president of the Standing Council of Canonical Bishops in America.

DISCUSSION ON THE RESTORATION OF WOMEN TO THE DIACONATE in Orthodoxy began in th latter part of the 20th centur Research shows that despite th decline of deaconesses in the earl Middle Ages, Orthodoxy never prohibited it.

(Continued from front page)

CHRIST IS RISEN

not dead. He is alive with God the Father in heaven. Sometimes our crosses will have ICXC, NIKA on them, which means Jesus Christ Conquers. Christ has destroyed the confines of death for us by His Resurrection, so that we can hope for everlasting life with Him. Let us rejoice in this, and proclaim loudly the Paschal Tropar: "Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!"

(Continued from front page)

MY MOTHER'S PRAYER BOOK

because she trusted Him as her Saviour she is now in heaven with Him.

A mother experiences great joys and intense sorrows. But she submits her life to God, every year of her motherhood serves His eternal purposes. For this she prays.

HOSTING THE RISEN CHRIST

Saint Isaac the Syrian wrote: "All other sins are as dust before God. The only true sin is to be insensible of the Risen One".

During Lent we tried, each according to his will and capacity, to fast, to pray, to be vigilant against temptations - to turn towards God in repentance.

Now we want to celebrate! This is good! More than that - it is excellent! God loves human joy. He created us with the capacity of being full of joy and happiness. When He creates something it is because there is a place for it in the universe, in human life.

Let us be sensitive to the Risen One in our festivities. Let us be alert to the needs of our brothers and sisters all around us in this world. Let us bring the joy of the Resurrection with us wherever we go.

Let's visit cemeteries. Note how death and resurrection are now inextricably linked. Let's visit hospitals with the triumph of the Risen One. Let's be ready to reject all hostility and re-open the ways of friendship between ourselves and those with whom we have had difficulties.

Let's take care of sacred places: God's Temple, prayer corners in our homes and our hearts. If we do not find any let's erect them with humility and gratitude for the privilege of being able to host God in our midst. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Ihor George Kutash, Priest

NOW I KNOW

*The Holy Day of Ascension will be celebrated on 40 days after Pascha on June 9.

*The Holy Day of Pentecost will be celebrated 50 days after Pascha on June 19.

*From Pascha until Ascension we use the Greeting "Christ is Risen!" with the reply "Indeed He is Risen!" or "Christos Voskrese!" with the reply "Voistinu Voskrese!"

*From Pascha until Pentecost we do not kneel in prayer either in Church or at private prayer.

*We can eat meat and do not fast all of Bright Week, which is the week after Pascha.

*The round loaf of bread topped with an icon of the Resurrected Christ, which is blessed at the end of the Divine Liturgy on Pascha is called an artos. While living on earth, Jesus called Himself "The Bread of Life."

*The week following Pascha is called Bright Week, because all of creation is renewed by Christ.

*The Royal Gates, those in the middle of the ikonastas, are left open all week, signifying that Christ by His Resurrection opened the gates of heaven.

*The winding sheet, plastinitsa, which we venerated on Holy Friday and Saturday can be seen on the Holy Altar, where it will remain until Ascension Day.

*Bright Monday was traditionally and unofficially known as Children's Day. They read in church, carried the banners in procession, made the collection - took off from school!

*We go to graves of our loved ones and leave a blessed egg as symbol of the resurrection.

MEMORIAL DAY

Originally Memorial Day was called Decoration Day. This day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic and was first observed on May 30 of that year when flowers were placed on the graves of both Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

Since our nation was founded, almost two million men and women have sacrificed their lives to defend and preserve this precious land of hopes and dreams.

May their memory be eternal!

Since this holiday has been made a long weekend, the date of observation has varied. However, this year it falls right on May 30.

Serviceman's Prayer

We thank Thee, O Lord our God for all the blessings which Thou givest me. Thou has kept us by Thy power in good health during the night and Thou hast called us up from sleep, that we may enjoy the light of day and to marvel at Thy majesty. We entreat Thee, O Lord,, grant that we may live this day without danger or sin, but full of Thy mercies and Thy divine care.

Protect my family and the families of my fellow servicemen from all evil. Enlighten the people who conquer and torture other nations, make them repent and seek peace, leaving other lands and their dwellers free. Open Thou the eyes of our mind to see Thy divine law and incline our hearts ever to do Thy commandments, to the glory of Thine all-holy Name of the Father and of the Son of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O Thou, loving Father of us all. Who are here and everywhere, let Thy blessing be upon my loved ones at home. Keep them in Thy gracious care, protect them by Thy power and make their hearts glad in the thought of Thy nearness. Help them and help me to feel that however separated we are by distance, in Thee we are close to each other. Amen.

BIBLE QUIZ

What conclusion do you put on your letters? Where can you find the following?

1. And they went out quickly and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed; neither said anything to any man, for they were afraid.
2. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.
3. Little children, keep yourself from idols. Amen.
4. Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.
5. The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.
6. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.
7. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Answers
1. Mark 16:8 the end of the chapter in some Bibles
2. John
3. 1 John
4. 1 Timothy
5. 2 John
6. Ephesians
7. Matthew

FUNDS

ALASKA: Anne Mae Andrek, Ethel Watlock, Louise Vandermark in memory of her brother, Steven Burch.
MISSION: Dorothy Sawko, John and Sheila Hrapchak, Nina Baker.
ALASKA AND MISSION: Anonymous (3) Stella Prihodko, Mary Semenick, Mr. and Mrs. William Veschuroff, Lillian Husted, Julia Guzy.
POSTAGE: Anonymous (2), Jane Lane Elliot, Lucille Adams, Olga Chirgwin, Katherine Laskowitz, Ella Dacy, Dorothy Sawko, John and Sheila Hrapchak, Mr. and Mrs. William Veschuroff, Julia Guzy, George Rachko, Mary Semenick, Stella Prihodko, Linda Roe, Olga Von Hoyer, Eugenia Longcrier, Mary Lutash, Victor Karaway, Mary Ann Giraro, Alexandra Tretter. Lillian Husted in memory of her parents, V. Rev. George and Matushka Anna Cucura. John Milosevich in memory of his wife, Mildred, who died on March 5, 2005.

MEMORIES I

I feel fortunate that my mother shared so many memories of her growing up years with me. Many of her stories were of happy times, but others were recalled with a bit of sadness.

In 1930, my mother was twelve years old. During the 1920s, their church had been active and growing in membership. With the onset of the Depression, everything changed. The parishioners could not afford a full-time priest, but one came in to serve on Pascha that year. As my mother recalled, she, her father, and older brother walked the distance to church for the 5 a.m. Resurrection service. The three shared the one family umbrella as they walked through a heavy rain. My mother sang in the choir, but she went home with the umbrella after Resurrection to bring her mother and little sister to church for Divine Liturgy. With them, they also brought their basket of food to be blessed. Prior to that year, the priest had blessed the food at parishioners' homes. Even though it was difficult for many of the people to carry the baskets for long distances, they were grateful to have a priest for Pascha and to have their food blessed.

Pascha is the joyous celebration of Christ's Resurrection, but my mother remembered this particular Pascha with some sadness.

Anonymous

MEMORIES II

During the 1950s, our church was bursting with children. There was a large Sunday school program and a variety of activities and organizations for the youth of the parish.

Even though I was very young, one Pascha stands out in my mind. As my mother and I entered the church for Divine Liturgy, an adult approached us and spoke to my mother. It was determined that there just wasn't enough room in the church for everyone, so I was escorted by a Sunday school teacher down to the church hall. Being only five or six, I was frightened to be separated from my mother. But what a surprise when we entered the hall! All of the parish's children and teens were assembled there. Neat rows of folding chairs filled the hall for us. Loud speakers were set up so we could follow the Divine Liturgy.

Other children looked after little ones, like me, and as I recall, everyone was well-behaved and very quiet. Once, I timidly looked behind me (before getting a stern look from an older girl). I was amazed at how many there were of us.

Although I was still a little scared, it was exciting for me to be a part of this large group of children.

Anonymous

Please submit your stories and anecdotes for *"Memories"* to:
Margaret Pysarchyk
2125 Garfield Street
Lorain, OH 44055 or e-mail:
mpysarchyk@hotmail.com

LIGHTER MOMENT

Several men are in the locker room of a golf club.

A cell phone on a bench rings. A man answers. Everyone in the room stops to listen.

MAN: "Hello."

WOMAN: "Honey, it's me. Are you at the club?"

MAN: "Yes."

WOMAN: "I'm at the mall - found this beautiful leather coat. It's only $1,000. Is it OK to buy it?"

MAN: "By all means, honey."

WOMAN: "I also stopped at the Mercedes dealership and saw the new 2005 models. I saw one I really liked, but it cost $80,000."

MAN: "Anything you like, honey. Just make sure it's fully loaded. Bye now - I love you."

WOMAN: "I love you, too, honey."

The man hangs up. All the other men in the locker room are looking at him in astonishment.

Then he asks, "Anyone knows who this cell phone belongs to?"

SOBORNOST
ELECTION OF BISHOPS

Regional "Primacies"

As a general rule, the Nicene canons contain no definite jurisdictional power over the metropolitans. The exception to this is the geographical area of the metropolitan jurisdiction given to the bishop of Alexandria in canon 6. This jurisdiction oversteps the boundaries of a single civil province. In order to justify this exception, canon 6 cites "the ancient customs" and similarities in the cases of the sees of Rome and Antioch, because in both cases, this privilege was not challenged. Dom Olivier Rousseau tells us:

> ...the Council does not speak of a universal primacy of Alexandria: rather it affirms that Alexandria has a regional primacy, because the bishop of Rome also has a regional primacy.
>
> The second part of canon 6 reads: "Also in Antioch and the other provinces (*eparchiai*) the honorary privileges (*presbeia*) must be preserved for the churches."
>
> Now this second part of the text provides the general sense of the term *presbeia*, which was recognized as belonging to three churches: Rome, Alexandria and Antioch. In fact, more precisely, the canon grants *presbeia* to Alexandria by reference to models already existing in Rome and Antioch.

Primacy is already defined in famous Apostolic Canon 34:

> The bishops of every nation must acknowledge him who is first among them and account him as their head, and do nothing of consequence without his consent ... but neither let him (who is first) do anything without the consent of all; for so there will be unanimity...

According to Schmemann, the essence of regional primacy is stated quite clearly: it is not "power" or "jurisdiction" (for the primate can do nothing without the assent of all), but the expression of the unity and unanimity of all bishops, and, consequently, of all churches of the area.

There is no need to go into the details of the rather complicated history of the "metropolitan district" in the ancient Church. Let it suffice to say that in the second and third centuries, such a position belongs to Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Lyons, Carthage, etc.

Canon 6 of Nicea, however, now acknowledges a "primacy" to Alexandria (and Rome and Antioch) that includes a notion of *exousia*. Bishop N. Milash in his commentary of this canon shows quite clearly that "power" here must be understood as "priority" or "privilege"; one may describe it as a "primacy of authority." Schemann explains:

> Let us stress that we have here not so much the primacy of a bishop ... but the primacy of a particular church, her special spiritual and doctrinal authority among other churches ... in difficult or controversial cases, these churches took upon themselves the initiative of appeasement or, in other terms, of reaching and expressing the "agreement" of all churches. The local churches looked to them for guidance and counsel and recognized in their voice a special authority.
>
> Yet primacy of authority here cannot be defined in juridical norms, because it has nothing to do with *jus* as such; yet it was quite real in the life of the early Church and the seeds of the future patriarchates are to be found in it. Once again, we must stress that its essence and purpose is not "power," but the manifestation of the existent unity of the churches in faith and life.

Also noteworthy is canon 7 of the First Council, which for different reasons, grants an *akolouthia tes times* ("priority of honor") to the Bishop of Jerusalem, guardian of the sacred shrines of the Holy Land, while safeguarding the rights of the metropolitan of Palestine whose see was in Caesarea, the secular capital of the province.

Fr. Michael Dahulich, Ph.D.
Dean of St. Tikhon's Seminary

MOTHER'S DAY

Our nation celebrates Mother's Day on May 7, a national holiday that is not yet 100 years old but whose sentiment goes back to the beginning of humanity. It was in 1914 that President Woodrow Wilson officially declared Mother's Day to remember all living and deceased mothers, but for as long as people have been on the earth t[illegible]ave existed strong ties between mother and child.

Many recognize that bond as the most significant relationship in a person's life, and it influences our personalities, our future lives and our relationships.

It is only natural that mothers take such an active role in developing the spiritual nature of their children. In those early years so much is formed about how we see God, ourselves and others. Part of the difficulties mothers, and fathers, face in raising their children is the balance between nurturing and spoiling their children. It is a natural human desire to make the lives of your children better than your own, but parents must be careful not to hand the world to their children while depriving them of the reality of life and how to live in the world.

On this Mother's Day we all have an opportunity to think back on the lessons taught us by our mothers and be grateful for their nurturing love and guidance. We show our love and gratitude by the way we live our lives.

* * * * * *

The gospel of Christ was spread primarily by word of mouth. Sometimes the apostles would move on to another city only to receive a request for more teaching from the city they had recently left. So they would write letters (Epistles) to be read aloud to groups of individuals who met for teaching and encouragement. They also wrote letters while they were confined in prison.

THE DIVINE LITURGY

Five loaves of bread are taken to the Table of Preparation. Last month we learned that the portion taken out of the first bread, called the Lamb, is the only part which will be used for Holy Communion.

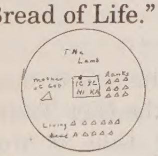
The priest then takes the second loaf and cuts out a small particle "In honor and memory" of the Mother of God "through whose prayers" he asks God to accept this holy sacrifice. He sets this particle on the right side of the Lamb particle which is resting on a flat platter called the paten. While he is placing this particle he says: "The queen stood at Thy right hand..."

Out of the third loaf, [illegible] cuts nine particles in honor of the nine ranks of saints, angels and archangels, prophets, apostles, Fathers of the Church, martyrs, venerables, healers, Joachim and Anna (the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary), and St. John Chrysostom or St. Basil according to whose Liturgy is being celebrated. These nine particles are set in three rows on the left side of the Lamb.

Out of the fourth loaf, the priest takes particles while saying prayers for the living members of the Church, the Patriarchs and bishops, rulers of the land and all the living. These he places below the Lamb.

Out of the fifth loaf, particles are taken in memory of the dead and these are set below the particles of the living. Particles from loaves sent up with names of special intention are also set here.

In this symbolic way, the whole Church in heaven and on earth is represented gathered around the Lamb "The Bread of Life."



Question:

1. How many loaves of bread are used in the Liturgy of Preparation?
2. What happens to special requests we may ask prayers for?



IN THE BIBLE AND CHURCH

Women have often gone unrecognized for their achievements and contributions. And sadly, this is often true in the church. But in Romans 16 and on the calendar in May we have examples of the honoring of women who serve faithfully. St. Paul praised Phoebe as a "helper of many and of myself also" (vs. 1,2). He commended Priscilla and her husband Aquila, who risked their lives for his (Paul's) sake (3,4). Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis "labored in the Lord." (12). Paul mentioned at least eight women for whom he had great appreciation.

If we check the calendar for May we find the Myrrhbearing Women (Mark 15:43-16:8) honored on the 15th, The Samaritan Woman (John 4:5-42) on the 29th, the all Holy Mother of God of the Lifegiving Font on the 6th, St. Helen along with Constantine on the 21st.

In the United States, we also honor all mothers on the 8th.

Women of faith deserve honor for their service to God and others. Think of the women who are faithfully serving in your church. Why not give them a word of thanks and praise this month?

Undique (*from everywhere*)

During Bright Week, the royal doors are left open to signify that Christ by His Resurrection opened the gates of heaven.

Orthodox and Roman Catholic publications print the word Virgin in Virgin Mary (with a capital "V") while most Protestant publications use the lower case "v". The capital "V" functions as a title and calls attention to her perpetual virginity and to her unique role in the mystery of redemption.

St. John Chrysostom calls the Bible: "Letters by our Heavenly Father transmitted by the sacred writers to the human race in its pilgrimage so far from its heavenly country..."

Although it is now the practice to allow non-Orthodox to attend the Liturgy of the Faithful, it is still the practice to reserve actual participation in the sacrament of Holy Communion only to members of the Orthodox Church who are fully committed to the life and teachings of the Orthodox faith as preserved, proclaimed, and practiced by the Church throughout history.

Are we more inclined to say: "Listen, Lord for your servant is speaking," or "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening"?

There were 200 Russian monks on Mount Athos in 1840. By 1910 there were about 5,000. This was out of a total population of 10,000 monks on the Holy Mountain. This resulted in a destructive split of monks into ethnic "Greek" and "Russian" factions.

According to a BBC poll, Brits believe that sloth, gluttony, envy, anger, pride, and lust should no longer be black marks on a person's soul. They rank cruelty, adultery, selfishness, bigotry, dishonesty and hypocrisy as the other worst sins. Only greed remains from the original Seven Deadly Sins described by Thomas Aquinas (1225-74).

Although Orthodox Services can often be elaborate, solemn, and lengthy, they express a deep and pervasive sense of joy. This mood is an expression of our belief in the Resurrection of Christ and the deification of humanity, which are dominant themes of Orthodox worship. In order to enhance this feeling and to encourage full participation, services are always sung or chanted.

Editor's Notes

CHRIST IS RISEN!
INDEED HE IS RISEN!

With this issue, we start our 54th year of publication. Who would have thought on a spring day so long ago that we would be printing into a new century? We have completed ten books of "Heralds" and are partially through our eleventh one. We often hear the advice "Live one day at a time." For us with the "Herald" it has been one month at a time.

I often think of the saying in Ecclesiastes: "To everything there is a season…". What season do we have in our lives? In days gone by our elders lived by the Church Seasons. They would tell you that they were born two days after Annunciation or their mother died on Peter, meaning SS Peter and Paul, etc. What seasons do we follow in our lives? Are they connected in any way with the Church Calendar?

You will notice in this issue a copy of a prayer which servicepeople recite at many Orthodox chapel services. You might cut it out, laminate it and send it to an Orthodox serviceperson that you know. We have reprinted this prayer after we received many requests for it.

Aphasia is a loss of the ability to speak, a condition that results when the message from the brain cannot get to the tongue because of an injury or illness. A similar spiritual malady affects many Orthodox. They are familiar with God's plan for their salvation, they are celebrating Jesus' Resurrection from the dead and hear of His promise granting them eternal life, but they never tell it to others. They do not demonstrate the impelling force of the early Christians who affirmed: "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20). This faculty connection between knowledge and sharing or telling must be corrected. Only as believers rely on the power of the Holy Spirit "Who art everywhere present and fillest all things" can they consistently share Christ with others.

The Risen Christ assured His disciples of this power to transmit His message to the world just before His Ascension. (Acts 1:8). That power is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit which we acknowledge: "who art everywhere and fillest all things…" Every believer has this source. We must keep the good news of God and His Holy Church flowing to those around us. If you can't speak, you can always give copies of The Orthodox Herald to help you. We can't let spiritual aphasia silence us.

May the brightness and joy of our Lord's Resurrection renew your life with love and goodness!

Matushka Nina Stroyen

PRESS FUND

Thank you all/Spasebo for helping us to keep publishing. It would not have been possible without you because we are not subsidized. John and Sheila Hrapchak, Betty Sarafin, Anonymous (5), Richard Reese, Dorothy Sawko, George Rachko, Irene Allen, John R. Barns, Alice Sutko, Anna Slanta, Mr. and Mrs. William Veschuroff, Mr. and Mrs. William Priatko, Helen Lesko, Helen Molson, Anna Dorozynski, Stella Prihodko, Stephen T. Murray, MD, Richard McCauley, Catherine Shaffchick, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Stuchlak, Deacon David M. James, Mildred Yadlosky, Julia Guzy, John and Irene Homa, Michael and Mary Beth Stenko, Olga Peck, Ethel Watlock, Eugenia Longcrier, Tom Swift, Anne M. Peregrim. Russian Liturgical Singers, George Margetich, Conductor.

George and Eileen Chawan in memory of George Yura and Fr. Basil.

Lillian Husted in memory of her husband, Richard, who died on January 2, 2004.

Zenovia Pecuch for health of Matushka Nina and in memory of Father Basil.

Fr. Peter and Matushka Charlotte Staviski in memory of Mary and Joseph Fedorchak, Peter Staviski and Fr. Basil.

Protodeacon Alexis Bona in memory of Metropolitan Leonty, Metropolitan Ireney, Archpriest Igor and Matushka Maria, Archpriest Anatoly, Archpriest Vladimir, Protodeacon John and Matushka Olga.

Edward and Irene Rhenish in memory of Fr. Basil.

Dr. John and Eva Chupinsky in memory of Fr. Nicholas and Matushka Fedetz.

Theodore Hamilla in memory of USAF Chaplain V. Rev. Basil Stroyen and USA Chaplain Rt. Rev. John Kivko.



There is a special blessing given for cheese in the Easter basket. This cheese may take many forms from an elaborate cheese paska to a plain dish of cottage cheese. Years ago, I was given an old country recipe by one of our parishioners. She made it in a square pan and used farmer's cheese. I've since shared it with one of my friends, who is cholesterol conscious, and she made it with nonfat cottage cheese with success. My sister made it diabetic friendly by using both nonfat cottage cheese and the new baking Splenda. This cheesecake does not have the same texture or richness you get with cream cheese.

OLD COUNTRY COTTAGE CHEESECAKE

Pastry or graham cracker crust

FILLING:

2 cups cottage cheese
1/2 cup milk
2 eggs
3 Tbls. all purpose flour
2 Tbls. lemon juice
1 teas. vanilla extract
2/3 cup sugar
1/4 teas. salt
1 teas. cinnamon (optional)

Place crust into an 8-inch pie pan or square pan. Put the cottage cheese and milk into a blender and blend until smooth. Add the eggs, flour, lemon juice, vanilla, sugar, salt and cinnamon. Process until well blended. Pour into crust. Bake in 325° oven about 60 minutes until filling is firm. Allow to cool completely before refrigerating. Take piece to church for blessing.

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Phoebe is one of the few women missionary figures of the New Testament. History indicates that it was not uncommon for women to have leadership roles in the early church, although it was certainly not typical in Jewish synagogues. Phoebe traveled to Rome, most likely to bring Paul's letter (what we know as the Book or Epistle to the Romans) to the Christians there.

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WORD$ CAN'T BREAK BONES, BUT THEY CAN BREAK HEARTS.

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WINTER'S GRACE

Betrayal by one close to us can produce a range of emotions: hurt, anger, despair, and even the most destructive, a desire for revenge. By these we can poison our physical system and ruin our health.

Psychologists recognize the self-destructiveness of unresolved anger, bitterness, and resentment. The Bible is also clear about what negative emotions can do to our health and happiness. Often, extreme hurt makes us withdraw from life into a shell. Like the tortoise, we are protected from hurt – but we are also insulated from joy and happiness.

We should follow Christ's example. It is a better way. He was abandoned or rejected by many close to Him especially in His hour of need. He endured the ultimate betrayal by Judas, a disciple and a dear friend. Yet He forgave them.

Through forgiving those who have wronged us, we can become whole again. Following the example Christ set for us, we can embrace joy and happiness that come from forgiving. A forgiving heart is a healthy heart.

LIGHTER MOMENT

A popular preacher admonished a class of divinity students on the importance of making facial expressions harmonize with speech when delivering sermons.

"When you speak of heaven," he said, "let your face light up and be irradiated with a heavenly gleam. Let your eyes shine with reflected glory. And when you speak of hell ... Well, then, your everyday face will do."

Home Bible Reading Schedule

MAY 2005

1. **Acts 1:1-8**
2. Acts 1:12-17, 21-26
3. Acts 2:14-21
4. Acts 2:22-36
5. Acts 2:38-43
6. Acts 3:1-8
7. Acts 3:11-16
8. **Acts 5:12-20**
9. Acts 3:19-26
10. Acts 4:1-10
11. Acts 13-22
12. Acts 4:23-31
13. Acts 5:1-11
14. Acts 5:21-33
15. **Acts 6:1-7**
16. Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60
17. Acts 8:5-17
18. Acts 8:18-25
19. Acts 8:26-39
20. Acts 8:40-9:19
21. Acts 26:1-5, 12-20
22. **Acts 9:32-42**
23. Acts 10:1-16
24. Acts 10:21-33
25. Acts 14:6-18
26. Acts 10-34-43
27. Acts 10:44-11:10
28. Acts 12:1-11
29. **Acts 11:19-26, 29-30**
30. Acts 12:12-17
31. Acts 12:25-13:12

BIBLE STUDY

Many words in the English language can be traced back to the Bible. One of these is <u>simony</u>, which concerns Simon about whom we can read in Acts 8:18-25, which is scheduled for May 18.

According to the reading, Simon, a sorcerer, a practitioner of magic and the occult, had a large following in Samaria before he was converted by Philip the evangelist. "To whom they all gave heed ... saying, This man is the great power of God." (Acts 8:10)

When Philip came to Samaria and preached the gospel, many of the former followers of Simon were baptized. Eventually, Simon himself was baptized because he was impressed with Philip's "great miracles and signs." (Acts 8:13)

A short time later, Peter and John came to Samaria to confer the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the new believers by the laying on of hands. Simon was even more impressed. He offered them money if only they would give him the same power. Peter became very angry because Simon became a Christian for the wrong reason. In verses 18, 19 he said: "Thy money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Peter then encouraged Simon to repent. Simon begged for their prayers that they would ensure forgiveness for his blasphemy.

The memory of this peculiar guilt has been perpetuated in the word <u>simony</u> as applied to the purchase of ecclesiastical pardons, offices or emoluments.

There are canons in the Orthodox Church against "paying for ordination" or advancement in the clerical ranks.

There is nothing more said about Simon in the New Testament, but references to him can be found in history. Some scholars regard him as a founder of a sect with Christian gnosticism. The term <u>gnostic</u> refers to a belief that salvation is to be won through <u>gnosis</u>, or knowledge, usually through a revelation. We can see the influence of this belief by referring to the First Ecumenical Council that had to deal with it.

In addition, his story is one source of the Faust legends about the man who sold his soul in exchange for earthly power.

There are seven other Simons mentioned in the Bible.